

Appl. No. 10/729,768  
Amdt. dated June 5, 2006  
Reply to Office Action mailed March 3, 2006

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-14 (Canceled).

Claim 15 (Currently amended): An apparatus comprising:

a shaft having open proximal and distal ends defining a lumen therethrough;  
an inflatable bladder disposed at the distal end of the shaft and in fluid communication with the lumen, the inflatable bladder upon inflation having a shape selected from the group consisting of: eccentric, conical, and wedge-shaped; and  
a cannula having an opening at a proximal end portion, an opening at a distal end portion, and defining a passage therethrough, the passage configured to receive the shaft and deploy the bladder at a target site in tissue, the inflatable bladder configured to separate adjacent layers of tissue when the inflatable bladder is inflated ~~and axially moved with respect to the cannula,~~ thereby defining a working space.

Claim 16 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the inflatable bladder does not substantially stretch when fully inflated.

Claim 17 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the inflatable bladder operates at pressures from about 10 mmHg to about 1000 mmHg.

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Claim 18 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the inflatable bladder operates at inflation pressures from about 100 mmHg to about 1000 mmHg.

Claim 19 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the shaft is rigid.

Claim 20 (Previously presented): The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the shaft is flexible.

Claims 21-22 (Canceled).

Claim 23 (Withdrawn): The retractor of claim 15, wherein the bladder comprises a wedge-shaped bladder.

Claim 24 (Withdrawn): The retractor of claim 23, wherein the bladder comprises a wedge-shaped bladder having an accordion structure.

Claim 25 (Withdrawn): The retractor of claim 15, wherein the bladder has an accordion structure.

Claim 26 (Canceled).